



Calories Count: Balancing The Energy Equation

(Article below edited with permission from an article in the International Food Information Council (IFIC)

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Ever wonder if what you hear about dieting and weight loss is true? Here are a few calorie myths and facts explained.

Myth: Eating most of your calories in the evening promotes weight gain.

Fact: No matter when you eat them, you gain weight when you eat more calories than you burn off. However, mindless munching in front of the TV at night can push calorie intake over the top.

Myth: Fat free is calorie free.

Fact: Some people indulge in extra-large servings of fat-free foods, such as cookies, cakes and crackers, without realizing that these foods may contain the same amount or even more calories than regular versions. Get the facts on fat-free foods by checking food labels for the serving size and number of calories per serving.

Myth: Carbohydrates (or sugars) cause weight gain.

Fact: Carbohydrates do not cause weight gain unless they contribute to excess calorie intake. The same holds true for protein and fat. Findings from the National Weight Control Registry show that people who successfully maintain weight loss tend to eat diets

that are higher in carbohydrates and lower in fat, in addition to watching their total calorie intake. However, some people who eat a diet that is extremely high in carbohydrates and low in protein and fat get hungry sooner, which may trigger overeating.

Five ways to trim 100 calories from food

- Swap an 8-ounce regular soft drink for a diet soft drink.
- Drink 2 cups of fat-free milk instead of 2 cups of whole milk.
- Use 1 teaspoon of mustard or ketchup or 1 tablespoon of fat-free mayonnaise in place of 1 tablespoon of regular mayonnaise.
- Split a small bag of French fries with a friend.
- Slice a typical piece of apple pie about one-third smaller.

Five ways to burn 100 calories through physical activity (based on a 150-pound person.)

- Pedal an exercise bike for 13 minutes.
- Practice some fast dance steps for 16 minutes.
- Work in the garden for 18 minutes.
- Walk briskly for 22 minutes (3.5 mph).
- Clean the house for 25 minutes.

Five food and foot power combos to cut 100 calories

- Eat five fewer potato chips and walk for 6 minutes.
- Eat one-quarter cup less of spaghetti with tomato sauce and walk for 11 minutes.
- Top toast with 2 teaspoons of apple butter instead of 2 teaspoons of butter and walk for 11 minutes.
- Spoon out 3 tablespoons less of mashed potatoes and walk for 13 minutes.

- Skip 2 half & half coffee creamers in coffee and walk for 15 minutes.

If you need help to improve your eating habits and prevent weight gain, *Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™* can help. Contact your local base Health and Wellness Center (HAWC) or Dietitian for more information or visit the *Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™* community website at <http://airforcemedicine.afms.mil/shapeyourfuture>.